

## PRAGMATIC ORAL PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH OF THE ENTERING FRESHMEN AT THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

By

EVELYN L. BARRIDO

Dean, College of Education  
Central Mindano University, Philippines

LORETO N. ROMERO

College Secretary, College of Education  
Central Mindano University, Philippines

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background of the Study

The quality of the dispensation of education depends largely on the kind of people who are responsible in the operation of the educational system. Above all the other important elements teachers are in the top of the hierarchy.

Bent on attaining its goal for quality education, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has issued a fresh mandate in the production of teachers imbued with the right attitude and aptitude in the aspiration for competency based education through the teacher training institutions (TEIs) all over the country. This is embodied in CHED memo no. 30 series of 2004 otherwise known as Revised Policies and Standards for Undergraduate Teacher Education Curriculum.

The rationalization of the new directive to be implemented this school year 2005-2006 is anchored on the premise that the pre-service teacher education curriculum should be geared towards the changing characters of student learners vis a vis the changing global standards and the redefinition of teaching competence.

The common notion that indeed we have an over supply of teacher education graduates, many of whom do not have the requisite skills to become good teachers. The profile of students who enter the pre-service teacher education program indicates below average students. This is confirmed in a study by Padua (2002) which reported that "we are not attracting the brightest students in teacher education". A conclusion reached in a commissioned

study CHED signified that the average TEI graduate has weak basic communication, literacy, quantitative skills and higher order thinking skills (Tumapon, 2005).

This observation is indeed alarming and that this should be taken seriously by education leaders and curriculum planners in teacher education schools. The order of the day is not on pointing with our fingers blaming who for the appalling situation. It would be best to draw plans and strategies to arrest or alleviate the situation.

Indeed there are larger issues that beset deterioration of education as reported in many studies of national scale (PCER, 1993). This prompted the tri-focal policy in the Philippine education service delivery. By tri-focal it means the concerns of the Department of Education, DepEd, the Commission on Higher Education, CHED and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, TESDA. To the very least of all the issues being addressed, the need to develop a solid foundation in a working language upon which learning is based is under question. The teachers' communication skills are under attack and any well-meaning institution like Central Mindanao University should take a closer look at this problem.

But that is just the tip of the iceberg. There are certain concerns which should be addressed properly by the Philippine schools. Time and again there are reports of dismal deterioration of education. Certainly there are number of factors to be pointed out for the causal effect of this degradation. One of these is on the language issue particularly English. This becomes a touchy issue which seems like a hornet's nest that requires certain ramification

psycholinguistically and sociolinguistically. The left and right attach against the English teachers who are not doing well in their job would not be of any help. But looking into the problem by examining the available data such as language per se as part of the investigation and their causative cognitive and social variables could shed light to the phenomenon of language deterioration. As well meaning decision makers in education, we should take a closer look at this situation.

Learner language is not an entirely new thing in the field of linguistics. From an interchange perspective (Corder, 1967) it is a language in its own right. This language varies much more than the native norm or standard in a deviant way. This is the natural rendering of language of the learner which exhibits some imperfection since they are still developing their own pattern. Chomsky (1965) termed this as performance error. It has sociological and psychological perspective on its variability which indicates how the situation affects learner's language use.

Teacher education demands positive language aptitude for both English and Filipino. It would be a disservice on our part if students are allowed to continue in a curricular program where they are not prepared in the first place. Verbal or linguistic intelligence is a must in the career path in teacher education along with the other intelligences. While it is true that multiple intelligences as Gardner, (1983) would put it is what a would-be teacher must possess language or linguistic intelligence must be prominent for all its intent and purposes in education. It is for this reason that appropriate assistance could be extended. It is our effort to improve the quality of students we have along with the goals and aspiration of the other units of the university.

## Objectives of the Study

*The study is guided by the following objectives:*

1. Assess entering freshmen's pragmatic oral skills in English second semester SY 2004-2005.

2. Describe the learner language respondents in terms of variability of the interlanguage
3. Determine the relationship of their language performance vis-à-vis:
  - a. high school grade
  - b. high school grade in English
  - c. CMUCAT score
  - d. CMUCAT score in English
- e. Personality factors such as: age, sex, course, etc.
- f. Communicative activities/exposures from high school such as involvement in organization and hobbies
4. Develop language intervention program for pre-service teachers based on the findings of the study.

## Significance of the Study

The growing concerns among parents and students, educators and everybody in the community on the need for quality and relevant education makes us pose this question: do schools provide quality learning to help today's children face the new challenges of the next century? (Kale 1998). What does quality learning tag along with? Adaptation and adjustment to the changes of time help our students meet the demands for quality education.

In his principal address at the 5th SEAMEO Innotech Conference in UP Diliman, Dato Sri Mohd Najib expressed his concern that as "quality of life in many of our countries are affected by rapid economic development and technological change, so must our education systems adapt and adjust to meet the rising demands on our respective nations." To do this, we need tools which are sensitive and sharp to transmit knowledge. We need to scrutinize how much effort Teacher Institutions exert in preparing their prospective teachers into their fields. Our educational system is challenged to develop a world

class quality of learning which will realize the full potential of the individual and fulfill the national aspirations (Najib, 1998). We have to produce quality students to maintain comprehensive edge to meet the future.

Indeed, what does quality learning tag along with it? It is on this premise that this study was conceptualized. Teacher education prepares would-be teachers towards their chosen profession.

The study, then, is significant in the following ways:

1. The study will assess the entering freshmen's pragmatic oral skills in English and Filipino.
2. Strengthen oral competencies of the next breed of teachers graduated from the CMU College of Education.
3. The result of the study would guide the admission policy makers and administrators in matters that directly affect the students' welfare, thus enhancing quality of output without sacrificing the quality of its input.
4. Results of this study may be used by the counselors to design supplemental learning activities to enhance oral skills of students in Teacher Education.
5. Finally, theories tested and supported in this study will provide future researchers bases for follow-up or further research.

## Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study involves students enrolled in the College of Education for the second semester 2004-2005. It will narrow down to freshmen in the six majors, Bachelor of Science in Education (BSE) majors in: English, Filipino, Mathematics, Biology, General Science and Physical Education. Representative sampling will be done from each of the six majors.

## Review of Related Literature

The bigger picture of education reforms in the Philippines calls for concerted efforts that shall promote equity and

access, quality and excellence, relevance and responsiveness in education. Teacher training institutions must give serious thoughts on how they deliver services in the turnout of their graduates year after year. It is best to examine their functionality as providers of well-equipped and well-tailored human resources for the teaching profession.

Teaching entails communication, first and foremost and this requires communicative competence par excellence. But as we take a closer look at our teachers today, only few could be considered models as users of English and Filipino for our students. Our Bilingual Education Policy demands that teachers should be both proficient in the two media of instruction especially at the tertiary level.

At the very least, teachers should possess the four communicative competencies. Canale and Swain (In Brown, 1997) speaks about. These are grammatical, discursal, sociolinguistic and strategic. They define grammatical competence as "that aspect of communicative competence that encompasses knowledge of lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar, semantics and phonology. Discursal competences is that aspect that includes how to connect combine sentence, say what you mean effectively in a paragraph or so to express your thoughts orally and in writing. Sociolinguistic and the strategic competences are more in the minding of pragmatics what to say or when to say according to the level of formality and relationships you have with your interlocutors. As teachers and would-be teachers, these and other considerations should be borne in mind.

Bautista (1997) writes that there are problems that are consequence of our language situation. Gonzales (in Bautista, 1998) offers explanation to this saying that English is not a foreign language used only for outside

transactions with the native speakers of the language but a dominant second language used within the society to fulfill various functions of social transactions. The result is that we have evolved our own kind of English. By the same token, we have come up with our own variety of Filipino or Tagalog reflective of our own natural language which is basically Cebuano.

The reality that this degradation of both English and Filipino has been happening in the classroom is documented in many studies. Peña (cited in Bautista, 1997) succinctly describes the phenomenon in her paper.

"Offhand, we can say that basilect, mesolect and acrolect are found in Philippine classrooms, in speech and writing of students, teachers, supervisors, and administrators at the elementary, secondary and tertiary levels. In other words, many school people, like students, may be construed as still progression along the interlanguage continuum, their speech and writing probably basilectal. Many others, like teachers and supervisors, and administrators, may have reached a post-basilect, new-acrolect or acrolect stage. Others may have reached a point where right and wrong forms have already fossilized."

In effect there is a tendency that if the language situation in the classroom will not be checked there would be a proliferation of ill-formed constructions in both English which will soon be fossilized and therefore will sprout another variant in English or Filipino construction.

The context of certain disjunctions on the resolution which will hinge the improvement of English and Filipino and learning in general in the Philippines is further aggravated by many instances. A team of four UP professors through a grant from the National Research Council of the Philippines (NRCP) conducted a study measuring the communication skills of tertiary teachers across disciplines in seven selected state colleges and universities

throughout the Philippines. The team measures the attitudinal, oral and written skills of the teachers of languages, e.g. vernacular, Filipino and English. The respondents contented that they read and wrote best in English and yet, their oral and written tests did not substantiate this perception. The study argued that if the teachers themselves have no clear awareness of their real strengths and weakness as English teachers or Filipino teachers, then they can be role models for the students.

On another vein the Guzman study (1998) strongly suggests for a change of emphasis the teaching of English and that is placing more emphasis at the discourse level rather than on grammar. The stress should be on reading, writing and speech communication rather than on the discrete study of grammar.

## Conceptual Framework

The College of Education, as an institution for teaching training, aims to develop skilled professionals in the field who integrate complex roles and dispositions in the service of diverse communities of learners. The teacher education program so provides developmentally and educationally effective approaches guided by sound principles and standards so that the graduates can be prepared to contribute to a democratic country, within a goal context. There are various fields in education wherein students are honed in English instruction. It includes engaging experiences to carry out the general education, foundation, and the professional pre-service course.

The idealized communicative competence the teacher-to-be should have the following qualities as described in ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines Speaking (2004).

- Able to communicate with accuracy and fluency in order to participate fully and effectively on a variety of topics in formal and informal settings from both concrete and abstract perspectives.

- Can explain their interests or complex matters in detail
- Provide lengthy and coherent narrations with ease, fluency and accuracy.
- Explain their opinions such as social and political issues and provide structured arguments to support their opinions.
- Able to develop/construct hypotheses to explore alternative possibilities.
- Has a command of interactive and discourse strategies such as turn-taking and separating main ideas from supporting information through the use of syntactic and lexical devices as well as intonational features such as pitch, stress and tone.
- No pattern of error in the use of basic structures.

Students who are enrolled in the different option courses at the College of Education to major in Science, Mathematics, General Science, Biology, and Physical education should be given the appropriate language learning experiences. Prospective graduates will assume varied professional careers with learners of different ages and abilities. Regardless of their area of specialization, they have the common denominator reflective of their mode of delivery through communication, either in English or Filipino.

It is seen that communicative ability is the very foundation of competence for the professional education of would be teachers. The coursework, field experiences manifest the drawing of these facilitative instructional skills. Educational theorists through the years have observed that although content knowledge and instructional skills are essential, teaching cannot be reduced to simple formulas or recipes for success. Rather the competent educator is characterized by habits of mind that emphasize critical thinking, experimentation and openness to change.

On the bases of the theoretical framework discussed, the following conceptual framework is drawn.

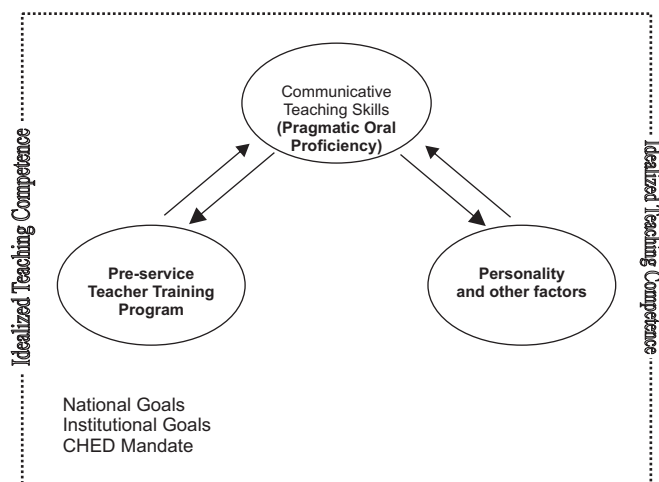


Figure 1: Research paradigm

## Operational Definition of Terms

**Performance Analysis** - This refers to the analysis and interpretation of the oral communication skills of respondents based on their high school grades, CMUCAT scores, language background, attitude and aptitude.

**Learners Language** - This refers to the second language rendering of English and Filipino of respondents. It is a rule-governed system consequently part of learners' performance in a realization of his/her interlanguage.

**Interlanguage** - The speaker's approximate of the target language but with communicative potential by using communication strategies.

**Entering Freshmen** - This refers to the high school graduates who are entering for the first time at Central Mindanao University after passing the CMUCAT on the second semester of 2004-2005.

**Interactional data** - Refers to the data originating from a communicative situation in which two or more persons engaged in minimally retrained oral interaction.

**Pragmatics** - Refers to the study of linguistic acts and the context in which they are performed (Stalnaker, 1972).

**Pragmatic Oral proficiency Categorization** - This refers to the categories reckoned in obtaining the rating. This includes: ability to answer questions, that is, how the subject expresses, grammatically (use of variants as optional elements in the utterance), interpretation of the specific functional meaning intended, phonology (word enunciation).

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The research design is basically keen in utilizing the descriptive method of research in the sense that the information and characteristics of the respondents enrolled during second semester at the college were looked into. Also the researchers takes the view of a sociologist interested in the causal relationships of the respondents' language background and previous language exposures in their intra and extra curricular experiences.

Sixty-three (63) entering freshmen during the second semester of school year 2004-2005 completed the language inventory and aptitude questionnaire to determine the extent of their language background and exposures. Then the students were subjected to the interview conducted by individual schedule stretch in four months (November 2004 to February 2005).

All the interviews were audio-taped and analyzed based on the parameters:

#### A. Pragmatic Goal Proficiency in terms of:

1. Ability to answer questions that is, how the subject expresses

- information structure (topic-focus articulation)
- argument structure
- use of discourse structure (anaphoric linkage)
- semantic relations

2. Ability to use linguistic structure and vocabulary:

- |   |           |  |
|---|-----------|--|
| 5 | Excellent | No noticeable errors of grammar and word order. Frequent use of complex sentences. Frequent use of high-level vocabulary.        |
| 4 | Very good | A few errors in grammar and word letter. Some use of complex sentences. Occasional use of high-level vocabulary.                 |
| 3 | Good      | Occasional errors in grammar and word order. Frequent use of short and basic sentences. Occasional use of high-level vocabulary. |
| 2 | Fair      | Occasional errors in grammar and word order. Frequent use of basic sentences. General use of low-key vocabulary.                 |
| 1 | Poor      | Several errors in grammar and word order. General use of incomplete sentences. General use of low-key vocabulary.                |

3. Overall organization, fluency, and flow or words

- |   |           |  |
|---|-----------|--|
| 5 | Excellent | Well-developed and highly organized expression. All of the sentences are highly related. Very smooth flow of words. No repetition and rephrasing.      |
| 4 | Very good | Well-developed and fairly organized expression all of the sentences are highly related. Fairly smooth flow of words. A few repetitions and rephrasing. |
| 3 | Good      | Fairly developed and fairly organized expression. Some of the sentences are related. Fairly smooth flow of words. Frequent repetition and rephrasing.  |
| 2 | Fair      | Fairly developed and unorganized expression. Most of the sentences are unrelated. Unsteady flow of words. Frequent repetition and rephrasing.          |
| 1 | Poor      | No development and organization of expressing. Most sentences are unrelated. Unsteady flow of words. Mostly repetition and rephrasing.                 |



4 Interpretation of the specific functional meaning intended.

5 Excellent Highly accurate expression in response to the question. The meanings intended are always carried out using appropriate expressions.

4 Very good Fairly accurate expression in response to the question. The meanings intended are frequently carried out using appropriate expressions.

3 Good Accurate expression in response to the question. The meanings intended are often times carried out using appropriate expressions.

2 Fair A bit inaccurate expression in response to the question. The meaning intended is often times carried out using appropriate expressions.

1 Poor Inaccurate expression in response to the question. Inappropriate expression the response has no bearing on what is intended.

## B. The Respondents/Sampling Procedure

The entering freshmen for the second semester SY 2004-2005 were the respondents of this study. These students were enrolled in Bachelor of Science in Education major in Biology, English, Filipino, General Science, Mathematics, and Physical Education.

## C. Statistical Treatment

Statistics used were in accordance with the objectives of the study which includes frequency distribution and percentages and analysis of variance.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main object of the study was to gather baseline data on language background and oral proficiency in English of the entering freshmen of the College of Education of school year 2004-2005.

The idea was to create a profile of students' learner

language and see how intervention can be planned based on the data gathered on a structured questionnaire and a 13 item eliciting device through a congenial interview.

## Freshmen Students Pragmatic Oral Proficiency in English

Four dimensions of looking at pragmatic language proficiency were used in the investigation. These are the ability to answer questions, grammatically, interpretation of the specific functional meaning intended and phonology or sound articulation.

CATEGORY	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING
A. Ability to answer questions	3.2222	Good
B. Grammaticality	2.6349	Good
C. Interpretation of the specific functional meaning	3.5397	Very Good
D. Phonology	3.4127	Good

Table 1: *Students Pragmatic Oral Proficiency in English.*

## Legend:

4.51	5.00	Excellent
3.51	4.50	Very Good
2.51	3.50	Good
1.51	2.50	Fair
1.00	1.50	Poor

The table shows the profile of students' pragmatic oral proficiency. Category C, interpretation of the specific function of meaning obtaining the average mean of 3.5397 has Very Good descriptive rating. Lesser average means are observed in category A (ability to answer questions), category B (grammaticality), and category D (phonology) indicating average means 3.222, 2.6349, and 3.4217 respectively which were marked Good in the descriptive rating.

For ability to answer questions, the students were able to express appropriate discourse structure such as information and arguments structures, anaphoric coherence and semantic relations.

As for category B, which is grammaticality it is well to note the description of the data using the following sub-categories:

1. Use of time fillers when talking, such as um, ah, etc.
2. Phonemic cues stuttering
3. Semantic and phonologically based word substitution including
4. Malapropism
5. Using indefinite words.
5. Insertions
6. word/phrase reformation
7. Perseverative use of words/phrases/clauses which are formulaic
8. problems of articulation
9. Ungrammatical construction (tense and aspects, etc.).

Order of Rank of difficulty and apprehensions of freshmen students committed during the interview are as follows.

The first in the ranking is an indication of some level of speech apprehension of the students by hesitation and use of time fillers such as um, ah, etc. Noticeable also in the language data are problems of construction. Students were careless in their use of tense and concordance. This ranked number two. The third in rank is the student's repetitions of words and phrases, another indication of apprehension. It seems that students were gibberish and tense during the sessions although the interviewer who was a research assistant was trying to be congenial although out the session.

The last three in the order of language difficulty are insertions, ranked 7; words/phrase reformation, rank 8; and perseverative use of words/phrases/clauses or formulaic, which ranked the lowest. Meaning there were only few students who manifested using trite and formulaic expression in the interview.

## VARIABILITY OF INTERLANGUAGE

The next concern in this study is a scrutiny on the learner

language variability from the corpora of language output. Representative samplings of the chunks of language were analyzed using qualitative linguistic analysis. Some of the patterns of language constructions observed that reflect the from-meaning connections the students achieved in their oral renditions are included in this discussion:

### 1. Intrasentential insertions

This observation came of the most prominent in the corpora. Students manifested fuggy sentence boundaries. This sentence sense is apparently very weak:

#### Sample 1

I think the woman in the picture is—is—she is—she's not concentrating her studies because she always—um—go—go around—um—with her barkadas jamming always then, she's not concentrating and focusing her studies. She's not considering the efforts of her parents but after certain consequences it's hard to change her attitude.

Here it seems the student does not have the full grasp of sentence sense. The responded was asked to describe what was on the picture. He/She is talking about the woman in the picture. Before the sentence could be finished, another idea or fragment of a sentence is inserted.

#### Sample 2

If it is happen to me then I will—uh—I have to—um—I have not to do it again because—um—it can bear—uh—a bad things to me especially [specially]—um—to my grades.

#### Sample 3

The word—love. Love is—many people, people what is love—a love that you give your partner, your friend, a love that can keep many experiences and many—a lot of things can give love to everyone of us.

#### Sample 4

In this program I found it very difficult especially I have to speak in English—um—The most important



experience I encountered thus far in the few months I've been here was it was during the first semester when it was—actually it was the second day of school when I and my friend was walking during the night when—um—when we go—um—his—uh—her cell phone was being—being get away from her.

## Past tense morpheme ed

The respondents were able to establish appropriate form meaning connections on this grammatical feature.

### Sample 5

I enrolled in College of Education course BSE Physical Education major—um—I discovered that Physical Education is one of thee—one of the majors for me which is highly recommended...This is the—the college is—um—the—the facilities are—most of it—then their—their standard of teaching is high quality.

In this course, I was pleased [plesed] that I'm a Physical Education major because—um—actually it is my desire. In this program, I found it easy—I found it easy because—because it is a practical questions are asked—um—when I—when I reach this—this particular place—um—I was pleased [plesed] and amazed I guess.

This feature is prevalent among the respondents' construction. It appears that past tense morpheme *ed* could be one of the first in the order of acquisition by the second language users.

## Substitution Errors

There are a number of instances that respondents manifest flaws in the use of referents (anaphoric and cataphoric) such as shown in the sample below which shows no control in pronoun-antecedent agreement in gender.

### Sample 6

The woman on the picture—uh—is—um—first he enjoying most of the time with her friends then after that, he—oh—she—she panicked

about—uh—because he wake up early that's why he got a big problem on how to answer the questions given by—uh—her teacher.

### Sample 7

This I will give the title "Oh, my god". There was a girl who spends her time just to go to the party at the 11 o'clock. He spend a lot—she just drinking. When she arrive at their house, at the 1 o'clock he just watching TV and after that, when he woke up—it is already 7:00, he—she remembered that they have an exam. When she walk into the driveway, she was embarrassed because there was a taxi that can—that can make them "Oh my god"—can make him hair, and when she arrive at her school—he—she came late. Her classmates already taken the exam and when—when...

### Sample 8

This is a story about a girl who attended the party last night and as she reached home, she watched TV and after that, after a tireless—no—a tiresome yesternight, she wakes up at already 7:00 A.M. and it's 7:00 so she rushes to school and she arrive late it's already 7:30 in the morning and as a result of going to the part last night, she haven't done her assignment.

It could be also that the second language user could not thing of a better word in giving of directions so he uses the same word. The same predicament could also be said in sample 5 when the same word and its variants to convey when the same word what he wants to say and its variants to convey.

### Sample 9

I think the woman is lazy and hot so, hot so particular in her studies. She goes first with those drinks and parties and watching TV's and late, 1:00 P.M. in the A.M. rather she prefers to do pleasure and fun rather than doing her assign, preparing for the school for tomorrow and she's not punctual because she wakes up 7:00 in the morning which is supposed to be you are in the school already. As a result of going late a rush.

## Sample 10

You should visit first the University Convention Center. I want to—to recall and share it with you thee—thee most important experience I had in this place, orientation of the freshmen students, um—the acquaintance party wherein I met new friends here and the variety shows wherein I am one of the performance dancing on stage, showing my talents to others.

## Sample 11

From the main gate, you walk then you see the college of Arts and Sciences. You turn [torn] to the right then you torn—you torn to the right and you can find the College of Education.

## Sample 12

I choose educator. For me, it means that a person who conducted or a person who educated—who educate to this students—who educate the students.

## 4. Perversative use of words/phrases

Language rendition of respondents was also observed to manifest penchant for use of the formulaic expressions or big words are not semantically compatible to what they are supposed to say.

## Sample 13

College of Education. When you are facing the main gate, when you pass through the main gate, you will see the admi. building, just walk straight to the admi. building and your would notice at the left wing of the admi. building is the College of Arts and Sciences then at the back of the College of Arts and Sciences—the College of Education, or you can pass through the college of Sciences to the College of Educations or to the small pathway designed for the College of Education.

Or consider the next sample, where the respondent breezes through a rendering of introducing the school with the aid of a brochure. Words and phrases he used are already catchwords and formulaic and therefore not very desirable.

## Sample 14

Hey guys, want to enroll in college? Don't think twice, Central Mindanao University, 1965. It was granted by the CHED center of excellence in .... CMU is not only a university but it is also called the university of the poor but intellectually deserving for the students. CMU make [meek] a high mark to the universities in the Philippines. It's ranked as number two for the whole country universities, which means second to the UP. In CMU, you will—you will have an adventure trip. Yes, it is an adventure in studying and being a citizens of this country of the Philippines. CMU makes you proud and intelligent and makes you happy with your life. So what are you waiting for, enroll now at CMU or the Central Mindanao University. Hey, let's go?

There is also an instance when a respondent simply renders utterance such as this where it is really difficult what was meant.

## Sample 15

If this happen to me, I don't know what to do. Maybe [meebee], I will just pray to God that "Oh, my God" please forgive me. Just—just give me what I've done. I do promise to you that this will not happen again because it's really hard. When I don't—I don't have to study, what—what about me, what about my future, what about my future family or whatever. I don't know how to—how to settle them if—if I am just wasting my time and not studying what happen to my family. They're just wasting their money so God I do promise to you that I will not do it again for the rest of my life.

## 5. Word Omission

Some learner groups were found to omit words such as articles more often in contexts such as adjectivally pre-modified context (art + adj + N) rather than simpler non-modified contexts (art + N)

## Sample 16

The place where I want to go most is in under the mahogany tree in front of the PTGC building because in that place I can inhale fresh—fresh air and I can study there and relax.

## Sample 17

The spot where I go most I—is the Home Economics. Home Economics 'cause I like it there because it's quiet and peaceful. You—uh, if you want to concentrate or you want to be alone just go there because it's very quiet and its nature—uh—you feel like you're in nature because of the trees.

## Sample 18

The word is "educate." I am in education, I'm after the college of education. From the word educate—you must impart information you think you know to the students. And you don't—and you—and you don't—um—teach them bad—or you should impractical ways in living like this millennium—this kind of era. You teach well and you should, you should know how to communicate.

These samples show the loose grasp of learners in the use of obligatory articles in NP structure. In sample 11 there are word or phrases omissions that would complete the sentence stem.

## 6. Concordance and agreement

### Sample 19

It is not prohibited to bring an orchids which is came from the natural resources or in the mountain. It is not necessary not to bring orchids in the home or get it from its natural place because it wouldn't cause anything. But if the bringing of orchids or any—any natural resources which can be brought home—it—it could—this would be too much it could cause imbalance to our natural resources. It would cause an imbalance to our ecosystem and I'm sure that it would cause problem to us as a people.

### Sample 20

I frequently goes to thee place in front of the library—um—for me it's very good place to be and you know you can do lots of things which are...If you were there you can do works there – assign...

## Sample 21

I choose the main library because it is very good place to study. In the main library you can learn a lot of things because there's so many references just like example if you are going to answer questions and assignments.

## Sample 22

Anna was an ordinary girl who have different activities in her life. She—uh—fun of parties—uh—she usually have her party at 11:00 then she went home and sleep at 1. one morning when she woke up and—uh—dress and preparing herself—uh—car pus...

## 7. Code switching

### Sample 23

I would you to go—uh—education cause here in education we have excellent teachers. We have a lot of courses—kanang you can choose—um—we have here—um course—um. I'd recommend that you'd go first to the fountain (founten) near the—uh—in front of the library because the place is so fascinating and that you can feel the beauty of nature for me you—you.

### Sample 24

It is about a girl who waste her time doing such idiocy, having such parties, not knowing, ignoring what will happen next, ignoring the exams then after—after having good time in the bars, he—ay—she went home not studying just watching TV—um—wasting all the time watching TV and he—ay—she slept—sleep late because of watching TV. In the morning, she was shocked by thee alarm clock it was almost seven then she have to took the exam then rushing—then by—she by...

## 8. Malapropism

### Sample 25

If this would happen to me, I would change myself of this delinquency because I can find myself in the future that I don't have that nice future because I just go to the party late at night, woke up late in the morning and then go to your school late that is why I have to change myself so that I could have a better future and the next

generation my—if I would be a future citizen of this country I can uplift the wrongdoings of the people.

## Sample 26

When you want to go to College of Education—uh—enter the main gate and then straight, you will find there a—it's a crossway and you—you—you go to that way—it was. The College of Education was located at the back of the College of Arts and Sciences. It was very easy because even though you pass the College of Arts and Sciences, at the back of that is the College of Education. You will not be lost. Even if you were new.

## 9. Other language rendition

### Sample 27

In this program I found it difficult and sometimes—in other place that it is also easy—why difficult? because this is my first time to have an interview and it is easy because you can, you can just talk with this cassette.

### Sample 28

In this program, I found it easy because I enjoy it and I feel funny for it. The most important experience I encountered thus far in the few months I've been here was when I was here at the first day of the class because it's not too funny, its not enjoy because we are embarrassed at our first subject on the first day.

## The Effect of Selected Variables in the Pragmatic Oral Proficiency of Students

With the pragmatic oral proficiency of each respondent, the rating was correlated with variables: high school grade, English achievement in high school, English score in CMUCAT and CMUCAT score along with personality factors: age, course, sex, religion, ethnic background, honors received, involvement, and hobbies. The analysis is found in the correlation matrix.

The table shows all the variables posed against pragmatic oral proficiency have no significant correlation at all. It indicates that pragmatic oral proficiency is important from all these factors. The analysis seems to suggest that the

VARIABLES	CORRELATION COEFFICIENT	SIGNIFICANCE (two-tailed)
Age	0.069	0.589 NS
Course	0.126	0.326 NS
Sex	-0.006	0.964 NS
Religion	-0.126	0.326 NS
Ethnic Background	-0.099	0.439 NS
Honors Received	0.079	0.539 NS
Involvement in Organizations	0.115	0.368 NS
Hobbies	0.021	0.869 NS
High School Grade	0.118	0.356 NS
HS Grade in English	0.020	0.877 NS
English CMUCAT Score	0.022	0.863 NS
CMUCAT Score	0.025	0.847 NS

Table 1: Correlation Analysis between pragmatic oral proficiency and selected variables.

oral language rendition of individual is no indication of achievement and language exposures he/she underwent. This is language performance which according to Chomsky the way how a person actually speaks with all flaws and inconsistencies that may come up in real time. That person may have the competences, his/her interval knowledge of the language as indicated by the learners' high achievements in English as shown in their grades both in high school achievements and CMUCAT achievements. However, these evidences were not manifested in the students' language output. It could be inferred that our language oral production may be flawed but we could still bring home the meaning we want to convey.

## Pedagogical Implications of Results

Based on the information obtained from the pragmatic and performance analysis of learner language, we might propose that the design for the teacher education program in the language domain at the College of Education should be closely attained to the following:

1. Maximization of the degree of autonomy which language learner exercise over their learning.
2. Employment of engaging language activities in all learning tasks.
3. Development of the strategic competence of learners through activities that encourage them to develop and exercise cognitive and metacognitive strategies.
4. Accommodation of different language learning stages allowing the teacher to apply Gardner's multiple intelligences in his/her classroom experiences.
5. Provision of both informal and formal language learning opportunities.
6. Maximization of opportunities for interactive classes so learners can keep on talking and therefore enhance fluency.
7. Situation of language teaching in reading cultural contexts.

## Conclusions

The significance of this study is not only the discovery of the type of learners' language students at the College of Education can be described, but it indicates that our students are not prepared for oral rendition of the second language. All evidences led to the fact that the affective filter of students are at work. Speech apprehension and anxiety are evident in their interview transcripts. The predominant presence of hesitations, time fillers like "ah", "umm", "eh", etc are strong indications. It would seem that their renditions are consistent with semantically-driven but not syntactically-driven productions.

On the reasons from interlanguage variation, it is evident that they had limited exposures to spoken English. In terms of multiple competence with minimal planning and maximal personal involvement demands for its development of requisite.

## WORK PLAN

ACTIVITIES	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Preparation of instruments, firming up of related studies/conceptualization	X	X										
Gathering of data			X									
Data encoding/ Processing				X	X							
Data Analysis Interpretation						X	X	X	X	X		
Preparation of Final Report											X	
Submission of Final Copy												X

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## PRAGMATIC ORAL PROFICIENCY CATEGORIZATION

- A. Ability to answer questions, that is, how the subject expresses
  - a) information structure (topic-focus)
  - b) argument structure (logic)
  - c) discourse structure (anaphoric coherence)
  - d) semantic relations
- B. Grammatically (use of variants as optional elements in the utterance)
  - a) sentence stem errors (misuse of adverbials, particles, negations, tense and aspects etc.)
  - b) hesitations, repetition, formulaic
- C. Interpretation of the specific functional meaning intended
  - a) appropriate expression in response to question
- D. Phonology (word enunciation)

Some attempts at describing the language proficiency of freshmen have been done in some schools.

Mansilla (2000) conducted a study to assess the performance of the Ateneo de Zamboanga College freshmen of SY 1999-2000 in the center for Educational Measurement (CEM).



Reading Test Level 3 Three Hundred Four (304) college freshmen were randomly selected. The test included scanning, vocabulary, point of view, comprehension and study arts. The findings showed that the subjects were reading below average. There were some whose reading level is that of a high school student, others even lower. This led to the recommendation that the Language Department create special reading programs to facilitate college freshmen.

In the same school, another study by Maigo (1996) which has similar objective with the present investigation examined the syntactic accuracy, types of errors, and the frequency of errors in 82 written compositions of college freshmen in school year 1995-1996. Findings revealed that 54.6% of the total number of sentences was erroneous; the four categories of errors found in the order of frequency were: word usage, sentence sense, verb and mechanics.

## SPEAK TEST QUESTION I REFLECTIONS

*Purpose: Develop self-assessment technique by reflecting on what student feel as students in the college of education.*

Complete the following statements using these lead-ins.

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_

I am enrolled in \_\_\_\_\_

In this college, I discovered \_\_\_\_\_

In this course, I was pleased that I \_\_\_\_\_

In this program, I found it easy/difficult to \_\_\_\_\_

The most important experience I encountered thus far in the few months I've been here was \_\_\_\_\_

## SPEAK TEST QUESTIONS II

This is a test in Spoken English. Try to respond to the questions below. Be sure to speak clearly and say as much as you can in responding to each question.

### Section A. The University Map

You will be given a map of the University Town of Musuan. Now, imagine that we are town mates. This is a map of the important spots in the university that you have suggested I visit. You will have 1 minute to study the map. I'll ask some questions about it.

1. Choose one place on the map that you think I should visit first and give some reasons why you recommend this place. (30 seconds)
2. I'd like to go to the College of Education. Please give me directions from the main gate. (30 seconds)
3. One of the spots is the place you go most frequently. Please tell me about that place and why you like it. (60 seconds)

### Section B. Picture Study

For the next section, you will be given a page with 6 pictures to study. I'd like you to tell me a story that the pictures show, starting with picture number 1 and going through number 6.

4. Tell me the story that the pictures show. (60 seconds)
5. What could the artist or the one who drew the pictures have done to prevent this? (30 seconds)
6. Imagine that this happens to you. What would you do? (45 seconds)
7. What do you think about the woman in the picture? (60 seconds)

### Section C. Free Explanations

For the next section of the test, I'd like to hear your ideas about a variety of topics. Be sure to say as much as you can in responding to each question. After I ask each question, you may take a few seconds to prepare your answer, and then begin speaking when you are ready.

8. Many people love to go on nature trekking. Other people believe that certain plants or orchids from the forest should not be taken from their natural surroundings and be brought home. I'd like to know what you think about this issue. (60 seconds)
9. You are in a teacher education program at CMU. Select a term used frequently and define it for me. (60 seconds)
10. What is your idea of a good teacher? (60 seconds)

### Section D. Graph Interpreting

11. The graph presents that \_\_\_\_\_. Describe to me the information given in the graph. (60 seconds)
12. Now discuss what this information might mean to you or some people you know (45 seconds)

### Section E. Presentation Skills

For the last portion of the test, you will be given a material to study. This time, it is CMU Bulletin of Information. Pretend you are a member of the team campaigning for students to enroll at CMU. Given the data or information in the brochure, make a campaign presentation. In your presentation, do not just read the information printed, but present it as if you were talking to a group of people. You will have 2 minutes to plan your presentation and will be told to begin speaking. (90 seconds).